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## BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

The Hebrew expression **בְּאַמָּה** after numerals

THE word **אַמָּה** 'cubit', when modified by a cardinal numeral, is treated in two ways in the Old Testament passages in which it occurs. It may follow the regular construction of a noun modified by a numeral, standing in singular or plural, or before or after the numeral like any other noun<sup>1</sup>, e. g.,

**אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת** 'four cubits' (Ezek. 43 14).

**חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה** 'fifty cubits' (Ezek. 40 21).

**חֲמִשִּׁים אַמּוֹת** 'fifty cubits' (Ezek. 42 2).

**עֶשְׂרִים אַמּוֹת** 'twenty cubits' (II Chr. 3 3).

Or the definite singular governed by the preposition **ב** may be used after the modifying numeral, e. g.,

**אַרְבַּע בְּאַמָּה** 'four cubits' (Exod. 26 2).

**חֲמִשִּׁים בְּאַמָּה** 'fifty cubits' (Exod. 38 12).

A similar construction with *ba* occurs in Ethiopic, though here it is not confined to the word for cubit, e. g. *ba-ʾēmat* (cubit), *ba-saql* (shekel), &c. (cf. Dillmann-Bezold, § 191, 1). Here this is apparently a circumlocation for an accusative of specification, perhaps due to a mixture of such an accusative after higher numerals (as in Arabic) with a prepositional phrase with **ב** used as an equivalent of a partitive genitive.<sup>2</sup> This theory, however, does not explain the article or the absence of such a construction with other nouns of measure in Hebrew.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gesenius-Kautzsch, *Heb. Gram.*<sup>28</sup> p. 453 ff. also my article on *Comparative Semitic Syntax*, *JAOS*, vol. xxxii, p. 204 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. König, *Syntax der Heb. Sprache*, Leipzig 1897, §§ 312c, Anm.; 333b; 279.

The Hebrew construction has apparently originated in an ellipsis, e. g., אַרְבַּע בָּאַמָּה, אַרְבַּע בָּאַמָּה, חֲמִשִּׁים בָּאַמָּה stand in all probability for אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת בָּאַמָּה, חֲמִשִּׁים אַמּוֹת בָּאַמָּה, meaning 'four cubits, fifty cubits, (measured) according to *the* cubit',—'*the* cubit' being the ordinary cubit אַמַּת אִישׁ.

That the preposition ב may have the force here ascribed to it is shown by the expressions

בְּאַמַּת אִישׁ '[measured] according to the ordinary cubit [a man's arm or cubit]' (Deut. 3 11).

בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ '[counted] according to the sacred shekel' (Exod. 30 13 38 24; Num. 3 47 18 16).

בְּאַמּוֹת<sup>3</sup> '[measured] in cubits' (Ezek. 43 13).

Nouns of measure and weight are quite frequently omitted, as assumed in the case of אַמָּה, אַמּוֹת above, especially when followed by a noun of material or sort, e. g.,

עֲשָׂרָה שֶׁקֶלִים זָהָב = עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב 'ten shekels of gold' (Gen. 24 22).

אַלְפֵי שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף = אַלְפֵי כֶּסֶף 'a thousand shekels of silver' (Gen. 20 16).

עֲשָׂרָה לֶחֶם = עֲשָׂרָה לֶחֶם 'ten loaves of bread' (I Sam. 17 17).

אַרְבָּעִים אַמָּה אָרְךָ = אַרְבָּעִים אָרְךָ 'forty cubits in length' (Ezek. 46 22 *bis*; cf. 48 8ff.).

While the exact form of expression which is assumed to be the source of such phrases as אַרְבַּע בָּאַמָּה occurs nowhere in the Old Testament, in two passages we have closely analogous constructions, viz.,

תֵּשַׁע אַמּוֹת אָרְכָּהּ וְאַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת רָחְבָּהּ בְּאַמַּת אִישׁ 'its length nine cubits and its breadth four cubits according to a man's arm or cubit' (Deut. 3 11).

וּבִיד הָאִישׁ קִנְיָה הַמֶּדֶה שֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת בָּאַמָּה וְטַפָּח 'and in the man's hand a measuring rod, six cubits [long, measured] according to *the* cubit' + a palm [i. e. the sacred cubit, which = 1 ordinary cubit + 1 palm]' (Ezek. 40 5).

<sup>3</sup> The use of the article with the plural after ב is probably due to some analogy with the singular after ב, where the article is regularly used.

In the first example we have instead of **בְּאַמָּה** the phrase **בְּאַמָּת אִישׁ**, which is its equivalent, and in the second **בְּאַמָּה וְנִמְפָּה**, in which **הָאַמָּה וְנִמְפָּה** = 'the sacred cubit' stands in the same construction as **הָאַמָּה** 'the cubit'.

In the case of the noun of weight **שֶׁקֶל**, we have, on the other hand, one passage in which it is omitted before a designation of the kind of **שֶׁקֶל**, similar to the phrase **בְּאַמָּה**, viz.,

**עֲשָׂרָה עֲשָׂרָה הַכֶּף בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ** 'each spoon [weighing] ten [shekels counting] according to the sacred shekel' (Num. 7 86).

Here the full expression would be

**עֲשָׂרָה עֲשָׂרָה שֶׁקֶלִים בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ**.

The phrase **בְּאַמָּה**, therefore, may be regarded as an abbreviation for **בְּאַמָּה אֲמוֹת** or **בְּאַמָּה אָמָּה** after a numeral. Probably the ellipsis began in the later form, the repetition of the singular appearing especially superfluous.

Johns Hopkins University

Frank R. Blake

### Hosea's Birthplace

According to Christian tradition, Hosea was born at *Belemoth* or *Belemon* (see Simson's *Hosea*, 1851, p. 2; Nowack's *Hosea*, 1880, p. ix; cf. EB 2126, 9; EB<sup>11</sup> 13, 784, n. 1).<sup>1</sup> Pseudepiphanius (RE<sup>3</sup> 5, 421, 16) says of Hosea: οὗτος ἦν ἐκ Βελεμωθ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰσσαχαρ; cf. Nestle, *Marginalien und Materialien* (Tübingen, 1893) II, p. 22, below. This place has never been identified, but it seems to be a corruption of *Ibleam* which appears in 1 Chr. 6 55 as **בלעם** and in Judith 8 3 as **Βελαμων** or **Βαλαμων** (cf. *ibid.* 4 4: **Βελμαιν** or **Αβελμαιν**, **Βαιλμαιν**, and in 7 3: **Βελβαιμ**, **Αβελβαιμ**). **§** has in 8 3 **בית בעלמון** (EB 527). Hosea is said to have been an Issacharite, and *Ibleam* belonged to the district of Issachar (RE<sup>3</sup> 17, 426, 7). Josh. 17 11 and Jud. 1 27 do not prove that *Ibleam* was a Manassite town. It was included in the Plain of Jezreel, and the Plain was regarded as Issacharite territory. In Jud. 1 27 **Ⲫ<sup>v</sup>** has **Βαλακ**,

<sup>1</sup> For the abbreviations see above, p. 41.